

so wohl wegen eigener Disposition einzelner Güter, als
 in „Vermögen, wieweil Einigkeit, so wohl der Künftige an
 —, 10. — dass Abzugeben, Vorkaufsrecht eintragen lasz.“
 In der Eintragung genommen, und cum curatore darüber
 quittiert, wieweil aber Contrahentes resp. cum et per Cu-
 ratorem allen dieser Gewandtschaft Vorhandlung entgegen
 stehenden Schwierigkeiten und Streitigkeiten, so wohl in
 gemein als insbesondrer lictigen Sa. und Verhandlung,
 Schlichtung, Entzug, Verhandlung über oder unter der
 Güter, und wie sie sonst Klagen haben und nicht
 werden mögen, nachsetzt; Also ist dieser Gewand-
 schrift angenommen, in quantum juris confirmiert,
 hinwider aber genehmigt, mit dem, was die dabei
 adhibierten Gewandtschaftsbesitzer und Contrahen-
 ten eigenhändig unterschriebenen Original-Protocoll
 wieweil übereinstimmend

Zeitsunde
 anwesend, so wohl ein Gleichheit davon dass Ge-
 richts Buch de do 1777 fol. 196. b. einverleibt worden.
 So geschah in Sebütz am 4. Novembris. 1809.

(L.S.) Das Stadtgericht allda
 Christian Gottlieb Groll
 Polizr. Sebüt. jurat.
 et Notar. rep. Saxon.
 immatricul.
 Christian Gottlieb Groll
 d. z. Vorkaufsrecht.
 Christian August Ochs
 d. z. unges. Bürgermeist. Sa.

Concordat originali
 Christian Gottlieb Groll
 Notar.

to her husband

Carl Gottlieb Sturmen

and her two children

Carl Gotthelfen and

Carl Friedrich Augusten brothers Sturm represented by their

*guardian Johann Gottlieb Böhmen, citizen and master linen weaver from here
for the sum of*

Sixteen Groschen

*With the stipulation that the three mentioned buyers shall split the Gerade into
three equal portions, but maintains*

1

*lifelong rights of usufruct of Gerade as well as disposition of various pieces
of the Gerade and*

2

*rescission and vitiation of Gerade sale by returning the sum of 16 Groschen as
she sees fit*

*[...] The parties accept by handshake [...] the seller relinquishes the keys for the
Gerade containers to the buyers and the guardian, respectively, however, receives
back the keys because of lifelong rights of usufruct and*

disposition of various pieces of the Gerade [...] as well as 16 Groschen in cash of which she acknowledges receipt.

[...] The Gerade sale is accepted [...] confirmed [...] signed and a document issued which was added to the court records of 1777 on page 190b.

Thus taken place

at Sebnitz November 4, 1809

The City Court

(Seal)

signature

city judge

notary public

signature

mayor

In court, pieces of the Gerade are listed in detail. Such lists provide a snapshot of cultural history because items can be written in dialect, which will tell something about the founding and development of settlements, local jurisprudence and history of a village. To minimize the difficulties our ancestors faced when it came time to inherit Gerade or Heergeräte, a new law was passed in May 1814 for the Kingdom of Saxony. This law stated that the terms Heergerät and Gerade would no longer be considered in the law of succession. Consequently, the two terms were not mentioned at all in the establishment of the civil law of Saxony in 1863.

For the family historian, the Kauf- und Handelsbücher of the Ämter and Amtsgerichte can be a true treasure trove of information. With relatively little research, in some cases one can establish a list of owners of a farm (usually family members) from the middle of the 1800s back to the early 1600s. Especially when namesakes appear in the same village, or people are referred to by their epithets only, confusion can arise and a list of successive names may clarify cases of perplexity.

If sales and inheritance contracts offer no further clues, the researcher may need to branch out and consider other records available through the legal system. Such records may be "Verzichte". When a buyer finally paid off his installments (Termingelder or Tagzeiten), the seller then gave him a release of claim, the so-called Verzicht. Since the property almost always remained in the family, minors or unmarried children mentioned earlier may appear in such declarations. They now have married names and partners. In this way additional information can be garnered.

In the Handelsbücher the family historian may also find information about a farmer's later marriage. When he remarried, the father had to portion off the mother's possessions to his children of the previous marriage. In order to participate in the legal system, females and minors needed guardians, who could turn out to be relatives.

Sometimes a farmer had to declare bankruptcy. In such instance, the Handelsbuch will reveal to whom is owed money, a horse, or a cow or would list further payments he was obliged to pay and to whom.

“Erbbücher”, if the information was recorded thoroughly, can list all lease holders of a village including those under the jurisdiction of another manor lord. The Erbbücher contain recordings of the Ämter and can show who possessed a tract of land at any given time.

A few authors have pointed out the value of court records and published some of their research. In 1933 Arno Lange described a specific collection, “Kollektion Schmidt”, which has to do with manor estates left to waste after the Thirty Years War. Lange also drew attention to his own collection of land records extracted from the Rochlitz, Colditz and Leisnig Ämter of Saxony (central Saxony). Both collections are housed in the State Archive of Dresden. (Lange, Technik der Bauernforschung, 29).

More recently (1988), Volkmar Weiss and Karlheinz Butter published a genealogy for Zschocken by Zwickau. The authors attempted to reconstruct from the court records for Zschocken and from sources of adjacent villages, a gap between 1540 and 1720 for which no church records exist. The church records for the area were destroyed by fire in 1716. Court records supplied information that could not have been known in any other way.